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The situation in Afghanistan

Crime prevention and criminal justice

International drug control

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Sixty-fourth year

Letter dated 21 May 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement by the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation dated 6 May 2009 concerning the growing threat to international security posed by the spread of narcotic drugs from Afghanistan (see annex).

I should be grateful if this letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17, 97, 98 and 99, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vitaly **Churkin**

* Reissued for technical reasons.

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Annex to the letter dated 21 May 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the State Duma on the growing threat to international security posed by the spread of narcotic drugs from Afghanistan

In 1998, a Political Declaration and the Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development were adopted at the twentieth special session of the United Nations General Assembly. The decade that has passed since then has shown the legitimacy of the goals established and the urgency of achieving them.

The State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, while supporting and commending the joint efforts by States around the world and the work of international organizations and civil society to destroy or significantly reduce illicit drug crops, must state with regret that the international community has not fully achieved the objectives that were set at the twentieth special session of the United Nations General Assembly.

While consistently emphasizing the urgency of achieving those objectives, the State Duma urges the international community to conduct an objective assessment of the results obtained and the strategies used.

The Deputies of the State Duma note with concern the continuing growth in the opium poppy cultivation area and expansion of opium production in Afghanistan. The statistics of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime show that Afghanistan's opium production increased 42 times from 2001 to 2008, reaching 7,700 tons, which means the country has a global monopoly on opium production.

A careful study of the situation in Afghanistan leads to the conclusion that most of the opium production takes place in the south of the country. The continuing military confrontation in Afghanistan and the lack of security are hindering agricultural production and encouraging the production of narcotic drugs, while income from drug sales is the main source of financing for terrorist and extremist activity.

The optimistic conclusion that the "opium-free" northern provinces of Afghanistan are an example for the other provinces is contradicted by the fact that the same provinces now have record harvests of another drug crop, cannabis, which is used to obtain marijuana (Afghanistan being one of the world's leading producers). Furthermore, most of the best-equipped laboratories for making heroin from the opium harvested in the south of the country are located precisely in the northern provinces, which are close to the borders with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

If the current methods of countering the threat of the spread of narcotic drugs from Afghanistan continue to be used, it could take many years to reach a definitive solution to the problem.

The State Duma reiterates that countering the growing threat of the spread of drugs from Afghanistan is a common task of the international community, a task

7. All interested States and international organizations should take part in the complex preventive operation Kanal, which is being successfully carried out by the Collective Security Treaty Organization, and support the effort to establish drug control and financial security belts along the borders of Afghanistan.

Moscow
6 May 2009